

Aldermeshian 1999-0795

IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (Canceled).

2. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting data across a network comprising the steps of
receiving a plurality of Internet protocol packets each of which contains data and priority information at a first router;
encapsulating the data contained in the Internet protocol packets into frame relay frames containing the priority information;
transmitting the frame relay frames from the first router to a frame relay network in a manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames;
and
transmitting the frame relay frames across a frame relay network to a second router in manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames

~~The method of claim 1, wherein the step of transmitting the frame relay frames from the first router comprises transmitting the frame relay frames over a group of more than one permanent virtual circuit.~~

3. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein each of the more than one permanent virtual circuits is used to transmit frame relay frames having predetermined priority information.

4. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein each permanent virtual circuit is used to transmit frame relay frames having predetermined priority information when a congestion condition exists.

5. (Original) The method of claim 2, wherein the group of permanent virtual circuits includes at least one circuit designated to carry frames containing critical information and at least one circuit designated to carry frames containing non-critical information.

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6. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting data across a network comprising the steps of
receiving a plurality of Internet protocol packets each of which contains data and priority information at a first router;
encapsulating the data contained in the Internet protocol packets into frame relay frames containing the priority information;
transmitting the frame relay frames from the first router to a frame relay network in a manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames;
transmitting the frame relay frames across a frame relay network to a second router in manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames
converting the frame relay frames arriving at the second router into Internet protocol packets having the priority information; and
transmitting the Internet protocol packets from the second router toward a destination location in a manner determined by the priority information included in the Internet protocol packets.

7. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting data across a network comprising the steps of
receiving a plurality of Internet protocol packets each of which contains data and priority information at a first router;
encapsulating the data contained in the Internet protocol packets into frame relay frames containing the priority information;
transmitting the frame relay frames from the first router to a frame relay network in a manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames;
and
transmitting the frame relay frames across a frame relay network to a second router in manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames

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~~The method of claim 1~~, wherein the step of transmitting the frame relay frames across a frame relay network to a second router comprises the steps of:

receiving the frame relay frames at a frame relay egress switch; and
transmitting, the frame relay frames from the frame relay egress switch to the second router over more than one permanent virtual circuit.

8. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein each of the more than one permanent virtual circuit is used to transmit frame relay frames having predetermined priority information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 7, wherein the frame relay frames are transmitted from the frame relay switch to the second router in a manner determined by priority information included in the headers of the frames.

10. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting data across a network comprising the steps of
receiving a plurality of Internet protocol packets each of which contains data and priority information at a first router;
encapsulating the data contained in the Internet protocol packets into frame relay frames containing the priority information;
transmitting the frame relay frames from the first router to a frame relay network in a manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames;
and
transmitting the frame relay frames across a frame relay network to a second router in manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames

~~The method of claim 1~~, wherein the priority information of each Internet protocol packet arriving at the first router is located in a header of each Internet protocol packet.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of transmitting data across a network comprising the steps of

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receiving a plurality of Internet protocol packets each of which contains data and priority information at a first router;

encapsulating the data contained in the Internet protocol packets into frame relay frames containing the priority information;

transmitting the frame relay frames from the first router to a frame relay network in a manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames;

and

transmitting the frame relay frames across a frame relay network to a second router in manner determined by the priority information included in the frame relay frames

~~The method of claim 1~~, wherein the priority information of each Internet protocol packet arriving at the first router is a function of an address of each Internet protocol packet

12. (Canceled)

13. (Canceled)

14. (Canceled)